

JUNE 12, 2023

REGULAR SESSION

PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL

The Pulaski County Council met in regular session Monday June 12, 2023 7:00pm at the Pulaski County Highway Department training room. Councilmembers present were Kenneth Boswell, Mike Tiede, Jeffrey Richwine, Tim Overmyer, Jerry Locke, Bradley Bonnell, and Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez with County Auditor Laura Wheeler and County Attorney Kevin Tankersley.

Also present were Gail Lambert, Larry Lambert, Mary Welker, Joe Moyer, Jason Stavedahl, Brandon DeLorenzo, Ross Davis, Randy Davis, Niki Clemons, Gary Overmyer, James Jordan, Nancy Lynch, Crystal Kocher, Jennifer Knebel, Leeann Wright, Cody Foust, Connie Ehrlich, Kevin Wyatt, Ross Davis Jasko Sabatini, Matt Muller, Hannah Pawelczyk, Chris Ross, Zoe Viktora, Linda Hunter, Jan Moyer, Melissa Young, Ed Cotner, Candy Myer, Derrick Stalbaum, Riley Tiede, Mark Cervenka, Gene Speicher, Leeann Wright, Bruce McDonald, Tom Thomas, Jason Kuchmay, Suzanne Morrow, Logan Wuetrich, Nathan Origer, Chris Schramm, Jason Semler, and Tom Martine (by Zoom).

The regular council meeting recessed for the Bottlebrush Energy LLC Public Hearing.

IN RE: BOTTLEBRUSH ENERGY LLC PUBLIC HEARING

Bottlebrush Solar Energy, LLC. (a.k.a. Invenergy) intends to construct a solar energy facility in Beaver & Salem Townships in Pulaski County and is asking for a ten-year real property and personal property assessed valuation deduction (tax abatement) for the project. Per the Economic Development Agreement, Pulaski County will receive \$10,000,000.00 in unrestricted-use economic development payments from Bottlebrush in 10 annual installments of \$1,000,000.00 each. Baker Tilly completed a Tax-Impact and Economic-Impact study showing that this project will have the effect of lowering every property tax bill in Pulaski County, even with a 100% tax abatement. The project's impact on total jobs is -7.3 with impact on wages of -\$174,713.00 (assuming those suffering from loss of job did not find a new job within the County). An increase in cash rent which would generate new operational income tax revenue is also expected.

The company claims to be the largest privately held sustainable energy company in US, based in Chicago. This is a \$290,000,000.00 project having 200 MGW units over 1500 acres fenced. Timeline is to have all County agreements in place by fall 2023, construction Spring 2025-Winter 2026 and in operation starting winter 2026. They expect to create two full-time jobs and pay \$35,000,000.00 to the landowners over the duration of the contract. Panels are built to withstand up to 140 mph winds and landowners can farm the acreage outside of the panels or Invenergy will mow for them.

Floor was opened to public comment, starting with Jason Kuchmay, who represents multiple Pulaski County landowners who are opposed to designating certain parcels as an economic revitalization area and approving tax abatement for Bottlebrush. Their objections are based on the following:

1. Bottlebrush failed to submit an application nor a statement of benefits. Therefore, there is no ERA request for Council to consider or approve.
2. The real estate does not properly qualify as an ERA as defined by Indiana Code. ERA is defined as an area which has become undesirable for normal development and occupancy.
3. Bottlebrush lacks standing to seek era status or to seek abatement for real estate it does not own. Indiana code confirms that only the owner of property is entitled to the deduction.
4. Some of the real estate is outside of the zoning jurisdiction of Pulaski County but is within the 2 mile area outside the boundary of Francesville, which has zoning jurisdiction. Bottlebrush has no zoning approval from the Town.

Others speaking were Joe Moyer, Tom Thomas, Linda Hunter, Randy Davis, Kevin Wyatt, Ross Davis, Suzanne Morrow, Bruce McDonald, Kames Jordan, Jennifer Knebel, Logan Wuetrich, Gene Speicher, Riley Tiede, and Gary Overmyer. They specifically had concerns over the review of the documents and wildlife disruption and believe a moratorium should be made on solar. Tom Thomas, town of Francesville Board President, stated that the Francesville Board will not approve any zoning change for solar. Logan Wuetrich and Gary Overmyer both spoke in favor of solar.

With no further public comments, public hearing adjourned at 8:20pm and the regular session convened.

IN RE: BOTTLEBRUSH ERA AND TAX ABATEMENT

Mike Tiede made a motion to approve ERA and tax abatement for Bottlebrush as presented, Jeffrey Richwine seconded and motion carried 4-2 with Jerry Locke abstaining. Mike Tiede, Jeffrey Richwine, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez, Kenneth Boswell voted in favor, Bradley Bonnell and Tim Overmyer opposed.

IN RE: ABATEMENTS

The 2023 pay 2024 abatements presented for review and approval and are as follows:

NAME & ADDRESS	AMOUNT OF DEDUCTIONS 2023 PAY 2024 ASSESSED VALUES	NUMBER OF YEARS APPROVED ABATEMENT
STANDARD PROPERTIES WINAMAC, IN 46996	\$ 52,710 (REAL ESTATE) \$ 184,380 (PEPERSONAL PROPERTY)	10 YEARS 10 YEARS
EDEN VALLEY ENTERPRISES FRANESVILLE, IN 47946	\$ 7,077,690 (REAL ESTATE) \$ 1,868,060 (PERSONAL PROPERTY)	10 YEARS 10 YEARS
FRANCESVILLE DRAIN TILE CORP. FRANCESVILLE, IN 47946	\$ 9,325 (REAL ESTATE) \$ 142,440 (PERSONAL PROPERTY)	10 YEARS 10 YEARS
DERRICK & ABBIE STALBAUM MEDARYVILLE, IN 47957	\$ 1,152.855 (REAL ESTATE)	10 YEARS
BRAUN CORP. WINAMAC, IN 46996	\$ 256,990 (PERSONAL PROPERTY)	10 YEARS
METAL FAB ENGINEERING, INC. WINAMAC, IN 46996	\$ 33,680 (PERSONAL PROPERTY)	10 YEARS
PERSONAL PROPERTY	\$ 2,485,550.00	
REAL PROPERTY	\$ 8,292.580.00	
TOTAL AMOUNT OF DEDUCTIONS GRANTED (ASSESSED VALUES)		\$10,778.130.00

Mike Tiede made a motion to approve the abatements as presented, Jerry Locke seconded and motion carried 3-2 with 1 abstaining. Mike Tiede, Jerry Locke, Sheila Hazemi-Jimenez approved, Bradley Bonnell, Tim Overmyer opposed and Jeffrey Richwine abstained.

IN RE: FRANCESVILLE-SALEM TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

Leona Speece resigned her position as a trustee on the Board of Francesville-Salem Township Public Library and Sara Strus was willing to serve out the remainder of her term, which ends October 1, 2026. Mike Tiede made a motion to appoint Sara Strus, Jeffrey Richwine seconded and motion carried unanimously.

IN RE: PULASKI COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Nancy Allman is up for reappointment on the Pulaski County Public Library Board on June 30, 2023. Mike Tiede made a motion to reappoint Nancy Allman, Jerry Locke seconded and motion carried unanimously.

IN RE: TRANSFERS AND ADDITIONALS

The following transfers were presented for review and approval:

1000-0005 County General/Sheriff			
From:	22200 Tires & Tubes	2,500.00	
	34900 Computers	12,730.00	
	33400 Public Relations	770.00	
To:	11503 Part-time Deputies		5,000.00
1235-005 PSAP/Sheriff			
From:	10902 Dispatchers	10,000.00	
To:	11504 Part-time Dispatch		10,000.00
1000-0201 County General/Superior Court			
From:	38010 Contracted Services	23,000.00	
To:	13500 Petit Jurors		20,000.00
	38202 Jury Meals		3,000.00
1000-0011 County General/Extension			
From:	37300 Rents & Leases	42.00	
To:	36300 Service & Maintenance		42.00

The following additional presented for review and approval to advertise:

1175 Misdemeanant/SHERIFF (Building and Structure repairs)	\$26,510.00
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Mike Tiede made a motion to approve transfers and advertise the additional as presented, Jerry Locke seconded and motion carried unanimously.

RE: OTHER BUSINESS

MATRIX discussion with focus on 2024 wages. No decisions were made.

With no other business to discuss, meeting was adjourned at 8:53pm.

Approved and signed this 10th day of July by the **PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL**.

PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL

KENNETH BOSWELL

MIKE TIEDE

TIM OVERMYER

JEFFREY RICHWINE

BRADLEY BONNELL

SHEILA HAZEMI-JIMENEZ

JERRY LOCKE

ATTEST: _____
LAURA WHEELER, AUDITOR, PULASKI COUNTY, IN